



Washington Conservation Guild

Annual Report

July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023

Submitted by Rachel Greenberg, President

Introduction

Founded in 1967, the Washington Conservation Guild (WCG) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and conservation of material culture. WCG serves as a regional forum for its members and as a resource to the public for learning about the care of personal collections. The Guild welcomes conservators, educators, scientists, archivists, collections professionals, art historians, students, and other allied professionals and conservation enthusiasts in the Washington DC, Maryland, and Northern Virginia region. As an educational association, WCG promotes the exchange of conservation ideas and knowledge through a program of monthly lecture meetings (September/October through May), outreach activities, workshops, lab tours, dedicated emerging professional activities, and a membership directory.

This Annual Report of the Washington Conservation Guild summarizes the activities and finances of the WCG for the season beginning on July 1, 2022 and ending on June 30, 2023. The purpose of this report is to communicate the activities that WCG has undertaken during the season to those members who missed the highlights presented at the May business meeting. Annual reports since the 2003-2004 season are available on the [annual reports page](#) of the WCG website.

Message from the President

This was the first full season that we have been back in-person since the COVID-19 Pandemic forced us to go virtual in 2020. It was wonderful to gather together again after so long.

A lot happened behind the scenes this season, and our all-volunteer Board was extremely busy. Due to some of these behind-the-scenes projects, which you can read about below, we unfortunately had less resources to spend on our members. However, the hard work has paid off and we are now in a good situation to give back to our members directly next season!

2022-2023 WCG Board

Officers

President: Rachel Greenberg
Vice President: Keara Teeter
Treasurer: Caitlin Smith

Membership Secretary: Laura Hatton
Recording Secretary: Anne Schaffer

Directors

Rhea DeStefano
Lauren Gottschlich
Christine Haynes
Pamela Kirschner

Caitlin Mahony
Nick Pedemonti
Liz Peirce

Advisory Committees

Communications

Chair: Anne Kingery-Schwartz
Google Workspace Administrator: Anne Marigza
Web Administrators: Arianna Carini Johnston, Karen Wilcox
Web Content Editor: Kate Brugioni Gabrielli
Social Media: Morgan Brown, Kaela Nurmi, Meimei Xu
Photographer/Videographer: Liz Peirce

Outreach

Community Partnership Project Coordinator: Dorothy Cheng
WCG Liaison to the Safety and Cultural Heritage Summit: Anne Marigza

Archivist: Alison Reppert Gerber

Logistics Coordinators: Veronica Diaz Mendez, Katya Zinsli

Emerging Professionals Committee: Maddi Coyne, Veronica Diaz Mendez

IDEA Action Committee: Adrian Hernandez

Documents Review Committee: Jayne Girod Holt, Anne Marigza, Ashley Jehle

Nominating Committee

Chair: past president, Jayne Girod Holt
Members: Janelle Batkin-Hall, Jeanne Drewes

Membership Summary

The total number of members this year reached 230. Of those, 26 were new members, 122 were renewals, 81 were emerging professionals, and 1 was an Honorary Member. This season, WCG implemented one free season of membership for emerging professionals. It turns out that WCG's list of Honorary Members was misplaced for years, but our Archivist was able to find an old copy of the list and we will now ensure that it is kept up to date. The membership directory was also resurrected and sent out in January.

Monthly Member Meetings

Below is the list of monthly meetings, including venues and speakers, held by WCG during the 2022-2023 season. The Vice President was outstanding in securing cost-efficient venues in a post-COVID era and the Logistics Coordinators knocked it out of the park in supplying excellent selections of refreshments. Directors are no longer in charge of two meetings per season but are responsible for various aspects of every event.

Although we were hopeful to have a large number in attendance when returning to in-person events, it appears that many people are still enjoying virtual meetings. Therefore, we decided to design a hybrid season with several online meetings and events. Recordings of these, as well as our in-person meetings, are posted for people to watch later on our [YouTube Channel](#).

Monthly Meetings

Date	Venue	Speaker(s)/Topic	Attendance
September 1	Shake Shack	56th Season kick-off/meet-and-greet	27
October 6	Evergreen Museum & Library	Jennifer Jarvis and Alessandro Scola Johns Hopkins University Libraries	23
November 3	Virtual Zoom.com	Kate Morrard and Shanna Daniel Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) Archaeology & Conservation Laboratory	46
December 7	S. Dillon Ripley Center	Lisa Sasaki, Interim Director of the Smithsonian American Women's History Museum (SAWHM)	36
January 12	S. Dillon Ripley Center	3-Ring Circus: Ewa Paul, Maggie Wessling, Deborah Parr, Christine Oricchio, Beth Knight, Mark Coulbourne, Bethany Greenho, Keara Teeter, Annabelle Camp, and Leah Bright	90 + exhibitors
February 2	Virtual Zoom.com	Valinda Carroll, Anya Dani, Nylah Byrd, and Ariana Makau Black Art Conservators Panel Discussion	98
March 2	The Kreeger Museum	Emerging Professionals: Emily Mercer, Katya Zinsli, Jones Kelly, and Kate Brugioni Gabrielli	33
April 6	Smithsonian American Art Museum (SAAM) McEvoy Auditorium	Anne Marigza (WCG) and Kathy Makos (AIHA) Joint meeting with the AIHA Potomac Section The Safety and Cultural Heritage Summit: A Conversation on Its Impact and Future Direction	46
May 10	Naval Masonic Lodge, DC	Business meeting and raffle	38

Additional Activities

Date	Venue	Activity	Attendance
October 22	Randy Cleaver's house. Takoma Park, MD.	Pewter Spoon Workshop with Ed McManus	10
April 17	Virtual Zoom.com	Federal Contracting Webinar with Lauren Horelick	60

Financial Highlights

As of June 30, 2023, our total financial assets are at \$38,287. We generated a surprising profit of \$8,278 due to unexpected donations and sponsorship. This season, WCG received several donations from Google employees with employer matching, as well as new [sponsorship contributions](#) from our many friends in conservation-related companies. Ten sponsors were kind and generous enough to support WCG's new initiative this season. The solicitation for these contributions was in response to the \$14,410 estimate for building a new website after the old one stopped working. Luckily, the final cost for the project came to \$10,570, thanks to the hard work of the WCG website team to keep the project on the low end of the projected budget. Since we now have more than the necessary two years' worth of savings to cover unforeseen expenses, we can do more to give back to our members, speakers, and cultural heritage partners next season.

Emerging Professionals Committee

The Emerging Professionals Committee (EPC), renamed from Intern Coordinators, planned in-person social and professional events throughout the season (listed below). These sorts of events not only provide a networking opportunity to our emerging professional members, they also help create community for many who are new to the area and far from family and friends. A survey the Committee sent out this season suggested that emerging professionals would like more virtual events next season.

Date	Venue	Activity	Attendance
December 16	Dirty Habit	Holiday Happy Hour	7
January 23	National Gallery of Art	Tour of the Preventive Conservation, Paper Conservation, and Science Departments	12 +2 EPC hosts

The Committee also oversaw the Williston Fund, which offered free WCG and AIC membership to 5 emerging professionals this season. Running this program includes maintaining an updated contact list of supervisors for emerging professionals in the DMV, reviewing applications, and selecting recipients.

Recipients for the Williston Fund for the 2022-2023 season were:

- Morgan Brown, Sophomore at Johns Hopkins University studying History of Art
- Jones Kelly, Frame Conservation Technician at the National Gallery of Art
- Kelsey Marino, Pre-Program Conservation Technician in Philadelphia
- Emily Mercer, Third-Year Intern at the Library of Congress
- Katherine Miromonti, University of Denver graduate in Pre-Art Conservation.

Williston Fund recipients Emily Mercer and Jones Kelly presented their research at the annual Emerging Professionals meeting in March 2023.

IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Accessibility) Action Committee

The IDEA Action Committee is responsible for implementing a vision for a more inclusive, diverse, equitable, and accessible WCG by establishing goals for the WCG Board of Directors as well as hosting events (listed below). As liaisons for the multiple WCG Committees, the IDEA Committee advocated for the Board to reach out to the Black Art Conservators (BAC) Group for one of our monthly meetings; to put our Community Partnership Project coordinator in touch with the caretakers of the Black Lives Matters protest memorial collection for a future collaborative project; and to work with the Emerging Professionals Committee to set up a mentorship program. The pilot mentorship program included two mentor-mentee pairs who met for three one-hour sessions, which gave us a good idea of what would be needed to roll out this program in a larger capacity in the future. The Committee also researched ASL interpreters and live captioners for our meetings in case any attendees require this in the future.

Date	Venue	Activity	Attendance
August 11	Virtual Zoom.com	Reading Circle discussing Sanchita Balachandran’s 2016 talk “Race, Diversity and Politics in Conservation: Our 21st Century Crisis”	7 +2 Board hosts

Communications Committee

The [new WCG website](#), launched in April 2023, was a project a few years in the making. This took an enormous amount of volunteer time from the WCG website team to review the old pages, design a new website structure, respond to board input, and communicate with web designer Vico Rock Media.

The Communications team continued to reach interested parties and recruit new members from across the globe. The social media team promoted WCG meetings, created “sponsor spotlights,” and posted bi-weekly job roundups on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#). Our videographer developed a method of getting high quality recordings of WCG meetings posted to our [YouTube channel](#), where anyone interested can virally participate in both in-person and virtual events.

Outreach Committee

WCG's coordinator for the Community Partnership Project, renamed from the Angels Project, was in touch with the caretakers of the Black Lives Matters protest memorial collection to plan a one-day pro-bono event. WCG members and museum professionals will help with mold mitigation of a portion of this collection of over 1600 pieces of memorabilia, which were exposed to precipitation when they were secured in situ on a fence in front of the White House in 2020. The event is still in the planning and funding stages, but will hopefully take place in the winter of 2023-2024.

WCG's Liaison to the Safety and Cultural Heritage Summit took a short break since a Summit was not held in 2022. However, planning for the next event started in early 2023, working with a large committee across five organizations. A hybrid in-person and virtual event will be hosted in October 2023.

Documents Review

The newly formed Documents Review Committee worked throughout the season to review WCG's policies and procedures. This included updating legal documents such as the bylaws, photography/videography releases forms, and the author copyright release form.

Preparation for Next Season

The Nominating Committee worked diligently throughout the season to encourage and select candidates to run for Board positions. Voting is now conducted entirely online, and the results are shared at the annual May Business Meeting. The election outcome was very positive, and I believe the new members of the WCG Board will ensure a successful next season.

At the end of the season, WCG sent out a survey asking for feedback and suggestions for how to improve the organization and to better suit the needs of our members. The Board has reviewed the results of the survey and is already making changes for next season. However, some things will stay the same, since many suggestions contradict each other, especially regarding ideal meeting schedules. We hope that means we are in a sweet spot with our timing!

Acknowledgements

WCG is grateful to all the institutions that hosted our monthly meetings this season, especially those that provided their spaces free of charge. The Guild would also like to acknowledge the support of the Smithsonian National Collections Program with help from the National Museum of Asian Art, without which the 3-Ring Circus at the Ripley Center would not be possible. Thank you also to the exhibitors at the 3-Ring Circus and the sponsors who helped us financially, allowing WCG to continue its programming and serve our membership and professional field.